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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2009

In Today's Papers

National Security Council Holds Critical Meeting
All papers: The National Security Council (MGK) of Turkey expressed on Tuesday reactions to the recent publication of an alleged action plan to overthrow the ruling AKP government. The council held its regular monthly meeting under the chairmanship of President Abdullah Gul in Ankara and the meeting lasted almost eight hours. A statement released at the end of the meeting said "The MGK has expressed views and reactions to recent publications and remarks aiming to harm our state institutions, and reaffirmed that such acts will be no use to our country." In addition, the MGK also said finding a fair and lasting solution to Cyprus problem was important for ensuring regional security, stability and welfare. "Therefore, Turkey supports the comprehensive settlement negotiations carried out within the framework of the good will mission of United Nations Secretary General, and the constructive efforts of the Turkish Cypriots," the statement said. The MGK statement also said that a settlement in Cyprus should be a new partnership established by two founder states under equal status and within the framework of political equality and bi-zonal structure. The statement also said that the Treaty of Guarantee and the Treaty of Alliance should be maintained, and a settlement should be taken under legal guarantee. In its statement, the MGK called on all concerned parties to refrain from stances that could harm the process, and to support the United Nations process and parameters. Finally, the MGK said it discussed recent developments in Turkish-Iraqi relations including fight against terrorism. According to mainstream Sabah at the meeting the government expressed determination to fight against antidemocratic initiatives. Mainstream Vatan says that the statement creates the impression that the government does not share military's concerns that there was a systematic campaign for wearing out the military and threatening the existence of Turkey.

PM Erdogan's Address to the Nation Notes EU Bid, Economy
In an address to the Turkish nation on TV channels, Erdogan said that Turkey is determined to go after changes not only in the economy but in all fields. "One of our goals that carries high importance is full membership in the EU," Erdogan said. "We cannot accept any other goal but full membership at any stage of negotiations with the EU," Erdogan said. "We are saddened by the

fact that certain European politicians use Turkey's EU membership issue in their domestic politics and this issue is exploited," Erdogan said. Such politicians unfortunately hurt the relations between our countries, Erdogan stressed. "Turkey's direction is clear. EU membership is only a tool. The real goal is to carry Turkey to further points of contemporary civilization," Erdogan said. "We will solve our problems in democracy and complete the process of change," Erdogan said. "Our struggle will continue until our humans reach comfort and faces smile," Erdogan said. Some of the most respectable global authorities refer to Turkey as the country that will come out of the global economic crisis most rapidly. We share the same notions. I would like to give this good news to you, Erdogan said. "We believe that all of our economic precautions will reach their goals and we will begin to feel the results of economic revival in the shortest time possible," Erdogan said. What we have to do here is to preserve Turkey's stability and use energy without paying attention to disaster scenarios, Erdogan said. All economic indicators show that the global economic crisis is slowly ending. This is a pleasing development, Erdogan added.

Turkish Economy Suffers Heavy Blow

Mainstreams Milliyet, Hurriyet and liberal Radikal report that Turkey's economy shrank 13.8 percent in the first quarter of 2009, breaking a record for the second time in its history. Turkey had broken its first record with 15.3 percent in 1945. With such figure, Turkey displayed the worst performance among OECD member states that were shaken by the global economic crisis. Russia shrank by 9.5 percent, Germany by 6.9 percent and Brazil by 1.8 percent during 2009's first quarter, while the Indian and Chinese economies grew by 6.8 and 6.1 percent respectively within the same period.

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Editorial Commentary on Turkish Economy

Mehmet Barlas wrote in mainstream Sabah: "Historic shrinking in economies shrinks ruling parties. The Turkish economy shrank by 13.8 percent in the first quarter. There are many dramatic examples around the world that these economic situations affect voters. The coming period is going to be tough for the AKP administration."

Colonel Dursun Cicek Arrested

All papers: Prosecutors conducting their investigation under the Ergenekon probe have arrested Colonel Dursun Cicek regarding Taraf's publication of an alleged action plan prepared by Cicek that sought to overthrow the AKP government. The Military Prosecutor's Office earlier released a statement that the said document was fake and that there was no need to press charges in a military court against Colonel Cicek.

Editorial Commentaries

Bekir Coskun wrote in mainstream Hurriyet: "Despite of a higher court decision, the presence of religious fundamentalism is not being questioned. And instead, the Turkish Armed Forces are now being judged for coup allegations."

Melih Asik wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "Turkey is in an extraordinary period. The shift from democracy to fascism is speeding up. Regulations for the trial of army officials by civilian judges are passed, under the guise of preventing coup plans. The civil courts are under pressure of the ruling administration. Can we reach democracy this way? Or does this way take us instead toward Nazi Germany?"

Petraeus in Turkey

Media speculate on the purpose of U.S. Centcom Commander David Petraeus' visit to Ankara. Mainstream Sabah headlines, "U.S. Central Command Commander David Petraeus has come to Ankara for a surprise visit," and "military sources say the agenda includes the topic of withdrawing U.S. forces via Incirlik air base and air bases in Diyarbakir and Malatya," as "Turkey, Kuwait, and Jordan will be used as three separate routes for the withdrawal." Meanwhile, Islamist-oriented Zaman headlines, "Petraeus Is in Ankara for Afghanistan, Not Iraq," and the paper notes U.S. Ambassador to Turkey James Jeffrey said Petraeus is in Ankara to discuss "our coordination against the PKK" and "our efforts in Afghanistan." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet notes Ambassador Jeffrey addressed a question regarding whether the visit regarded withdrawing U.S. troops through Iraq by saying, "there are no concrete plans on the withdrawal of U.S. forces through Iraq."

Bryza: Turkey is a Super Power

Mainstream Sabah, mainstream Haberturk, Islamist-oriented Zaman, liberal Radikal, and Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak report under the same headline, "We Can No Longer Pressure Turkey, (Who is) From Now On, A Super Power," that U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Matthew J. Bryza, said Tuesday Turkey "from now on is a super power," and "The U.S. cannot pressure Turkey." Bryza, speaking in Nicosia, also said, "The U.S. is not interested in anything but assisting in finding a solution in Cyprus." Mainstream Hurriyet says Bryza's super power comment is a message "from the U.S. to the Greek Cypriots."

Ambassador Jeffrey: Obama's Visit Shows Turkey's Importance

CNN Turk and NTV report James Jeffrey, the U.S. ambassador to Turkey, said that Obama wanted to show the importance he attached to U.S.-Turkish relations and strategic partnership with his visit to Turkey. During a reception in the Aegean province of Izmir in which the U.S. Independence Day was celebrated, Jeffrey said that this was the first Independence Day marked under the leadership of Obama. Jeffrey said Obama brought a new wind and humor to the United States, and the United States received positive reactions in international arena after Obama became the president. Also, Jeffrey said Izmir had a peculiar place in U.S.-Turkish relations and the United States established one of its first diplomatic missions in Izmir. Jeffrey said relations between the two countries had boosted after the World War II. The ambassador also said that Obama wanted

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U.S.-Turkish relations to go on strongly.

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- Kerem Tosun, the head of DTP branch in Corlu, is given 18 month prison sentence for terror propaganda.

- In address to CHP deputies in parliament CHP leader Baykal said that he expects the Constitutional Court or President Gul to veto the parliamentary regulation permitting civilian courts to handle military personnel's court cases.

- PM Erdogan's son Bilal is expected to go to the army this week to fulfill his military obligations. He will spend 21 days in the army in Burdur

World

- A Yemeni Airbus crashed into the Indian Ocean with 153 people aboard. A 15 year old girl survived the crash.

- At least 25 people were injured when a car bomb exploded in a market in Kirkuk.

- Georgia's Deputy FM Nalbandov describes Russia's large-scale military exercises in the Caucasus as a very dangerous provocation. JEFFREY